

Application No.: 09/976,796
Examiner: Matthew Anderson
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REMARKS

Claims 1-2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hitoshi et al. (JP-61044792). Hitoshi teaches use of a crucible and a susceptor, wherein both the crucible and the susceptor have holes align with each other and are placed above the melt to facilitate the escape of the SiO gas produced by the high temperature reaction of the molten silicon with the crucible through the holes to prevent SiO from solidifying and falling into the melt, thereby eliminating one source of dislocations.

Claim 1 has thus been amended to include a gap between the wall of the crucible and the wall of the susceptor, and a process gas introduced above the crucible and flowing in a downward direction where a portion of the gas enters between the respective wall and exits through the holes in the susceptor. Hitoshi does not claim, teach, suggest, or show in the drawings a gap between the crucible and the susceptor or a process gas entering this gap from above and exiting through ventilation holes cut into the susceptor.

Claims 2-5 all depend from Claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that the amendment to Claim 1 now places it in condition for allowance, as well as Claims 2-5 depending from Claim 1. It is respectfully requested that Notice of Allowance be issued in due course. The Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicant's undersigned agent by telephone at (360) 883-7575 to address any remaining issues in order to expedite examination.

Respectfully submitted,



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